

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~cell line which replicates hepatitis C virus (HCV)~~ replicating cell line, wherein said cell line is a selected from the group consisting of a non-monkey cell line, a non-chimpanzee cell line, a non-mosquito mouse cell line comprising an HCV genome and a human non-hepatic cell line.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The cell line of claim 1, wherein the ~~non-monkey, non-chimpanzee, non-mosquito~~ mouse cell line comprises mouse cells of hepatic origin.

5. (Original) The cell line of claim 4, wherein the mouse cells are Hepal-6 cells.

6. (Original) The cell line of claim 4, wherein the mouse cells are AML12 cells.

7. (Withdrawn) A non-human, non-chimpanzee, non-monkey, non-mosquito living host organism comprising cells which replicate HCV.

8. (Withdrawn) The living host organism of claim 7, which is a mouse.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for producing the cell line of claim 20 ~~a human non-hepatic cell that replicates HCV,~~ comprising:

a) obtaining total RNA from a human hepatic cell culture that replicates HCV, said total RNA comprising a selection marker which renders cells expressing said RNA resistant to a selection agent;

b) introducing the total RNA into human non-hepatic cells; ~~and~~

c) selecting those cells which grow in the presence of said selection agent and replicate HCV; and

d) generating a cell line from the cells of step c).

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A method of producing the cell line of claim 1 ~~a non-primate, non-diptera hepatic cell that replicates HCV,~~ comprising:

a) obtaining total RNA from a human non-hepatic cell culture that replicates HCV, said total RNA comprising a selection marker which renders cells expressing said RNA resistant to a selection agent;

b) introducing the total RNA into mouse ~~non-primate, non-diptera~~ cells; ~~and~~

c) selecting those cells which grow in the presence of said selection agent and replicate HCV; and

d) generating a cell line from the cells of step c).

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Withdrawn) A method for screening test compounds which inhibit HCV replication, comprising:

a) culturing the cell line of claim 1 in the presence and absence of a test compound; and

b) assaying HCV replication levels in the presence and

absence of said test compound, wherein a reduced HCV replication level in the presence of said test compound is indicative that said test compound inhibits HCV replication.

14. (Withdrawn) An HCV polynucleotide having at least one of the mutations shown in Table 11.

15. (Withdrawn) A polyprotein encoded by the polynucleotide of claim 14.

16. (Withdrawn) A method for screening test compounds which modulate the antiviral response induced by interferon alpha (IFN- α) comprising

- a) culturing the cell line of claim 1 in the presence and absence of a test compound;
- b) contacting the cells of step a) with IFN- α ; and
- c) measuring the HCV replication level in the presence and absence of said compound thereby identifying agents which modulate the antiviral response mediated by IFN- α as a function of altered HCV levels.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein the antiviral response is enhanced.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein the antiviral response is inhibited.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (New) A hepatitis C virus (HCV) replicating cell line, wherein said cell line is a human non-hepatic cell line and wherein said cell line comprises the RNA from a second cell line

which comprises an HCV genome.

21. (New) The cell line of claim 20, wherein the human non-hepatic cell line comprises epithelial cells.

22. (New) The cell line of claim 21, wherein the human epithelial cells are HeLa cells.

23. (New) A method for screening test compounds which inhibit HCV replication, comprising:

a) culturing the cell line of claim 20 in the presence and absence of a test compound; and

b) assaying HCV replication levels in the presence and absence of said test compound, wherein a reduced HCV replication level in the presence of said test compound is indicative that said test compound inhibits HCV replication.

24. (New) A method for screening test compounds which modulate the antiviral response induced by interferon alpha (IFN- α) comprising

a) culturing the cell line of claim 20 in the presence and absence of a test compound;

b) contacting the cells of step a) with IFN- α ; and

c) measuring the HCV replication level in the presence and absence of said compound thereby identifying agents which modulate the antiviral response mediated by IFN- α as a function of altered HCV levels.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the antiviral response is enhanced.

26. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the antiviral response

is inhibited.

27. (New) The cell line of claim 1, wherein said HCV genome is a HCV subgenome.

28. (New) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said HCV genome is a HCV subgenome.

29. (New) The cell line of claim 1, wherein said HCV genome is obtained from a second cell line which replicates HCV.

30. (New) The cell line of claim 28, wherein said second cell line is a Huh7 derived cell line.

31. (New) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said second cell line is a Huh7 derived cell line.

32. (New) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said RNA from the second cell line is the total RNA.